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Possessed *t'iao t'ung* and his assistant recording "god's words."

Matsu procession: a successful call for rain.

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The night before the wedding day, starting at midnight, a *pai-pai* is held at the boy's home. A Taoist priest (*tao shih*) officiates at the ceremony, held in honor of T'ien Kung to thank him for guarding the boy so that he could reach marriageable age, and prayers are said for the future of the boy and his family. At the same time, many lesser gods are invited to the *pai-pai* to be worshipped, and statues of these gods (which may belong to other villagers) are brought to the ancestral-worship room of the boy's home. The village orchestra performs during most of this ceremonial to entertain T'ien Kung. Many expensive foods, including at least one whole dressed pig and goat, bottles of wine, and a good deal of paper money are offered in honor of the gods and their soldiers and horses. (A description of the Taoist pantheon is found in Chapter 8.)

The *tao shih* invites the gods to partake of the sacrifices and transmits to them the prayers of the family. In the course of the ritual the *tao shih* and the participating members of the family, including the groom and his father and brothers, simulate trips to heaven and to the underworld to communicate with the gods. A shaman, known as *t'iao t'ung* (his broader functions are also described in detail in Chapter 8), accompanies them on these "trips." He is possessed by a local, less powerful, and important god known as an ambassador god and thus acts as the intermediary between the family and the higher gods. "After all," queried a villager on this point, "can a common man go directly on his own to see and talk with an emperor?"

Much of the food offered at the *pai-pai* is sent the next day as gifts to the girl's family; during the next several days it is fed to the guests who attend the wedding festival as well as the many people, usually *ch'in tsu* or fellow villagers, who help in the preparations and entertainment of the guests at the girl's village. The cost to both sets of parents is very great, and the poorest families save for a long time or borrow money in order to have a proper wedding festival.

While the boy's family is holding the *pai-pai* on the night before the marriage, the girl's family is busy with preparations for the next day. When the marriage broker, accompanied by the carriers bearing more gifts, and the village orchestra arrive, they are fed in the girl's village. Then, they help the girl's family load the many carts with her dowry and the sweet cakes which accompany the bride when she goes to the groom's village in her sedan chair.

The vehicles which carry the gifts to the bride's family and take the dowry back to the groom's village are either rented wheeled carts drawn by men hired in Lukang or trays carried on poles by the groom's *ch'in tsu* and/or fellow villagers. Only a wealthy family can afford to use the many hand-carried trays, since all the carriers must be fed banquet food and those who carry heavy items are given *hung pao* (money wrapped in a red paper packet). Far fewer wheeled carts are

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The bridal train follows a predetermined route, passing through several villages to display the dowry for all to see, even if the bridal couple live in neighboring villages and even if they happen to come from the same village. All along the route the special wedding music of gongs and horns attracts villagers who wish to see the procession.

The time of arrival in the groom's village, usually in the afternoon, has previously been fixed by a geomancer. Most of the villagers are outdoors waiting to examine the dowry. The bride's sedan chair is placed before the door of the boy's house, but the girl may not leave the chair and enter the house until the dowry has been ritually examined and accepted by the groom. Once this is done, a child of the household formally welcomes the bride to her new home, and she is led from the sedan chair and escorted into the house by the matchmaker. On entering the house the bride steps over a burning brazier and steps on and breaks a piece of red tile. The first act symbolically cleanses her of any ill fortune she may have picked up accidentally along the way (an example of such an accidental contamination is for the wedding caravan to pass a funeral along its route). The second act symbolizes the bride's willingness and her intention to obey her new family. These acts completed, she is led to a private room where "according to custom" she spends the next several hours alone except for occasional visits from the matchmaker.

That evening a festive banquet is held to celebrate the marriage. An even number of courses is always served, sometimes as many as sixteen to eighteen, and a great deal of wine is consumed. The banquet is attended by many guests, male and female, old and young, for the most part relatives (*ch'in ch'i*) and friends of the boy's family only. The adult males eat apart from the women and children. Either a *ch'in tsu* of the groom or else a fellow villager plays host at almost every table of male guests to see that the guests eat and drink and are generally entertained. Finger games to promote the drinking of wine are usually played. Other male *ch'in tsu* and village friends and neighbors serve the food to the guests, while the women help in the kitchen. The male cooks are hired from the village or from the local area. Dishes, tables, and chairs are hired for the occasion in Lukang and brought into the village by oxcart.

About halfway through the banquet the bride is brought out and, together with the groom and his parents, is formally presented to the assemblage of guests and villagers by a highly regarded elder *ch'in tsu* or a respected villager. After this introduction, many respected guests are called upon to give brief speeches; in these they remind the young couple of their duty to their parents and express hopes that children will soon result from the marriage, especially boys. The speeches completed, the groom goes from table to table, drinking with and accept-

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who act as cooks for the occasion. The meal is elaborate and consists of many of the same meats, soups, and other dishes normally served at a festival dinner.

Burial

During the course of the next day the actual burial takes place in the public cemetery at a time and place determined by a geomancer or *k'an feng shui te jen*. A number of tables are set up in the courtyard of the house beforehand, with many baskets of food prepared as sacrifices to the spirit of the dead displayed on them. These baskets of food, as well as lengths of dark colored cloth covered with written messages of condolence and money, have been sent by relatives and friends. The money and cloth are sent to the family almost immediately after the death. The baskets of food and wine are sent the day the burial takes place.

Once the sacrifices and incense have been set up on the tables, the coffin is carried out of the house and placed at the head of the tables. Many male mourners, including sworn brothers of members of the bereaved family, *ch'in ch'i*, friends, and neighbors—or representatives from the families of these people—then "worship" the spirit of the deceased, each performing an elaborate sacrificial rite on his hands and knees. One of the "heaviest mourners" (those with the closest patrilineal ties to the dead man) accompanies each one in the ritual in order to thank him. Throughout the worshipping the women relatives, especially the daughters of the deceased, lean against the closed coffin and wail aloud.[8]

While this ritual takes place outside the house, a small group of village men goes to the cemetery to dig the grave. When it is time for the burial, the coffin is carried on the shoulders of several men to the cemetery, followed by the mourners. Usually, only the heaviest mourners and close friends accompany the coffin the whole distance (about two miles) to the cemetery. However, many others who attended the funeral come out to the road to send off the coffin and mourners. While still on the road near the village, the closest lineal relatives of the deceased suddenly turn to these others and crawl on their hands and knees toward them. This is done as a form of obeisance, to thank them for their participation and to beg them not to bother to go to the cemetery. Then the mourners are helped to their feet by friends and more distant relatives such as *ch'in ch'i* and run to catch up with the coffin and the other mourners.

At the cemetery an elaborate ceremonial is conducted by a man who is often a combination geomancer and shaman (*fa shih*). In his capacity as geomancer, he is present to see that the coffin is placed in the proper position, and as shaman he is expected to invite the gods to the

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ceremony and, especially, to obtain the god of the earth's permission to break the earth and to ask him to accept the body. Once the burial is completed, all return to the village where an elaborate dinner is held for all those who participated in any stage of the funeral.

Several weeks after the burial, on a date set by a geomancer, the members of the mourning family reconvene at the cemetery to dedicate the tombstone. They again wear white mourning clothes, and a ritual is conducted by the same geomancer-shaman.

Mourning

After a death, the descendants usually observe heavy mourning for forty-nine days (seven weeks). During this period they worship the spirit of the deceased twice each day, at sunrise and sunset, coming together to wail and chant as they did on the day of the funeral.

On the hundredth day after the death, or sometimes after one year, another mourning ritual is held. On this day it is common to burn the temporary paper ancestral tablet and transfer the dead person's name and death day to the family's permanent wooden ancestral tablet. Until very recently, the name was placed on a small permanent wooden tablet instead of on the temporary paper one, which made it unnecessary to transfer the name to the main family tablet. It is also on the hundredth day that the mourning family sends sweet cakes to everyone who sent money or gifts at the time of the death. The sweet cakes are a symbolic message "that things are now better."

For three years after the death, patrilineal descendants of the deceased are supposed to wear the lengths of colored yarn to show they are mourning. At the end of this period, they usually wear red yarn for a few days just to show that things are now good again. Actually, in the village the colored mourning yarn is most frequently worn for only a year. It is also customary during this three-year mourning period for the women to wail at the grave when the family goes to the cemetery each Ch'ing Ming Chieh (a holiday early in April) to clean the graves and offer sacrifices.

If in the years following a death the family has not been able to produce a boy child or has been in financial difficulties or poor health, they may have the grave dug up and the coffin moved to a new and more propitious spot determined by a geomancer. This takes place at least three years, but usually more than ten years, after the death. Specialists from Lukang or from some other village are hired for such an occasion. These men, in the presence of the closest relatives of the deceased, pick out each bone, clean it, and attach it in a special order to a short charcoal pole which is placed in a tall ceramic pot. The pot is then reburied in the new grave and a new tombstone, engraved with the date of reburial, is set up.

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population. Hsin Hsing village owns the statues of two gods: one of the main village god, Ta Shih Kung, who is said to have accompanied the original founders of the village from the mainland, and one of the Earth God T'u Ti Kung. These statues were purchased with "public money" collected for religious purposes.

Some individual families have statues of personal or private gods whom they worship. There are two families in Hsin Hsing which have private gods: one of these gods, Er Shih Kung, has become very important in the village. He is considered powerful, his aid is frequently sought, and many of the villagers worship him on his birthday. The other private god is worshipped by only the one family. Their origins are unknown; according to the owners, the gods came from the mainland with their ancestors.

Origins of such private or personal gods are varied. Sometimes the origin is a vision. This is the case with one man in the area. For years he had been plagued by bad luck. He had no children and could not make an adequate living. One stormy night, walking through a wooded area, he was frightened by a flash of lightning, which showed him the form of a man in ancient costume high up in a tree. Fearing for his life, he claims that he immediately vowed to build a statue in the image of the vision and worship it as a god. In the twenty years since that day his fortunes have changed, and today he is a wealthy man with many children.

The great importance one of the private gods in Hsin Hsing has taken on has enhanced the prestige and prominence of the K'ang family which owns his statue. The majority of the villagers worship Er Shih Kung each year and frequently go to him for aid in time of illness or other emergency. Each time this is done, the contribution of the K'ang family to the village welfare is recognized. The family receives certain material benefits from the villagers, and families which feel they have benefited from Er Shih Kung's help feel a sense of obligation to the K'ang family. As a result, they feel obliged to help whenever the K'ang family needs some kind of favor. Each of the many village families which join in the *pai-pai* held by the K'ang family for Er Shih Kung on his birthday contributes several large, sweet, steamed cakes as sacrifices. These are kept by the K'ang family as custodians of this useful deity.

However, some village families feel a degree of antagonism towards the K'ang family; they feel that the K'angs are abusing their position. The most bitter antagonism is that of the Huangs, the family which owns the other personal god, which the village does not recognize. The Huang family is bitter about the situation and is joined in its antipathy by some others who appear to have been stirred up by its many criticisms of the K'angs. However, despite the bitterness, the two

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families do not express their antagonism openly, for this would be a serious breach of etiquette. Interestingly enough, neither of the two families which personally possess these private gods is a member of any *tsu* organization in the village. It appears that the possession of these gods by the two families is a means that each family has used to establish a place for itself in the village. The family in possession of Er Shih Kung, the god which has become popular in the village seems to have actually achieved this goal.

Other Supernatural Beings, Forces, and Beliefs

In addition to gods and ancestors the villagers believe in evil supernatural beings. They are known as demons or *kuei*, but, out of fear of their malevolence and respect for their power, the villagers more often speak of them as gods or *shen*. The already mentioned Good Brothers belong to this group of *kuei*. "When one hits such a bad thing," one's spirit becomes possessed or is taken away by the supernatural being, and sickness, ill-fortune, or even death may result. It then becomes necessary to secure the services of a shaman or diviner to determine the cause of the trouble and appease the spirit.

Fate and Divination

Beyond and stronger than the influence of gods and spirits is an all-pervasive force, fate. It affects and predetermines the over-all direction of life and events. The fate of an individual is determined by his eight birth characters and "the set of forces of Yin-Yang and the Five Elements, which were connected with the movement of the stars in directing the mystical operation of time, which, in turn, determined the nature of personal events" (Yang, 1961:135). The Hsin Hsing villagers' belief in the concept of fate was well described by Kulp (1925:171) for Phenix Village when he wrote,

> Fate decides all things. Fate determined the time of birth and it will determine the hour of death, the manner of death and the experiences between birth and death. It is useless to strive against fate. All one can do is to learn the will of fate and conform in the best possible way. One may try to outwit fate but sooner or later one is doomed to defeat. Such are the attitudes that people hold regarding the great events and experiences of life.

This belief leads to various forms of divination that are designed to determine what the individual has in store for him and what, if anything, can be done about it. Thus, if resort to ancestors, gods, magic, or medicines fails to produce results, the difficulty is accepted as predetermined by fate. The concept is especially valuable in preventing a weakening of the general belief structure, for if all attempts at manipulation through supernatural influence should fail, the concept of fate

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offers an acceptable explanation of the failure within the framework of the system.

THE ANCESTRAL-WORSHIP ROOM OR *KUNG T'ING*

The village family or *tsu* perform most religious and magical activities in the *kung t'ing* where the statues of the gods and the ancestral tablets are housed. This is a central room in every village house (see house diagram in Chapter 2), whether it is a large *tsu* house with many apartments belonging to component families or the small house of a nuclear family. Some households which reside in the apartments of a large *tsu* house reserve a small part of one of their own rooms as a kind of *kung t'ing* where they maintain ancestral tablets bearing the names of their own deceased parents or their own most recent ancestors. However, these households continue to share in the maintenance of the main *kung t'ing* of the *tsu* where a tablet recording all the names of the *tsu* ancestors is housed.

The *kung t'ing* of a Hsin Hsing village house is fairly representative of those found in the homes of the area and the homes of urban Taiwanese. (Today, usually it is only the mainlanders in Taiwan who do not have such a *kung t'ing* set up in their homes.) The appointments of the room include an altar which stands against the wall opposite the main entrance. Above the altar may hang two calligraphy scrolls which flank a scroll depicting the Buddhist goddess Kuan Yin. Statues of the main Taoist gods, a few in glass boxes, and the ancestral tablets stand on top of the altar. Incense receptacles and wine cups are placed before the statues of the gods. In front of the altar stands a large table on which food offerings are placed during worship. On ritual occasions this table is moved away from the altar and used as a dining table. The last appointment is an incense pot which hangs from the ceiling a few feet from the entrance to the *kung t'ing*, wherein the spirit of T'ien Kung, the highest god, is said to reside. He is not represented in statue form.

In many respects the care and function of the *kung t'ing* indicate the nature of village religion and its relation to other aspects of village life. Although this room is the most important single site for the performance of ritual activities, it is by no means limited to "sacred" events. The family entertains guests here on both religious and non-religious occasions, and it also serves as a meeting place for the family to sit and talk. Because it contains an electric light bulb, children play or do their homework here, and women gather here to work on fiber hats. Perhaps the most "profane" of the uses to which this room is put, particularly if the *kung t'ing* belongs to only one or a few households, is its use as a storage place for sacks of rice or fertilizer and mounds of sweet potatoes.

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sweet potatoes. In the case of a jointly owned *kung t'ing*, several members of the large *tsu* who share in the ownership of a harvesting machine or winnower may store the machinery in the room.

The multiple uses to which the *kung t'ing* is put account for its usually untidy and cluttered condition. It is seldom cleaned or dusted. Dust and ashes from burned paper money and incense accumulate during the period between the New Year's clean-up and the sanitation inspection of the village by the police and public office people.

In the Hsin Hsing area, statues of the gods are housed in the *kung t'ing* of village families or in temples. Actually, only the very powerful gods, such as the goddess Matsu and some of the underworld gods, are housed in individual temples, usually in Lukang or some other town. The Earth God is the only god who has his own small temple in each village. His temple is known as the T'u Ti Kung Miao. In a few larger villages a temple sometimes is built to house all the statues owned by the community. But Hsin Hsing and other small villages of the area have no such temple, and village-owned statues are therefore maintained in the *kung t'ing* of private homes. When it is necessary to worship many gods at one time, the gods are invited to come from their resident *kung t'ing* to the single *kung t'ing* which is to be the center of worship for the occasion.

Each year two different Hsin Hsing village families are charged with the responsibility of housing and caring for the statues of Ta Shih Kung, the village god, and T'u Ti Kung, the Earth God, and for arranging any events which concern these particular gods. Each family head is in charge of a single statue and is called a "pot master" (*lu chu*). (The term "pot" apparently refers to an incense or fire pot often used in the worship of a god.) The pot master is usually assisted by several men.

The pot masters and their assistants are said to be chosen by the gods themselves at the annual formal celebration of the village god's birthday. On this occasion, the names of all the village family heads are read out singly "to the gods," who are asked to make their choice. To determine the god's answer, kidney-shaped blocks are thrown in turn by each family head. The ways in which the blocks fall are interpreted as either an affirmative or negative reply. A third possibility is that the god is laughing at you. The men who are rewarded with the most positive responses are named pot masters and assistants. Not infrequently, the old head of the household who is selected as pot master is already virtually retired. In such a case, it is realized that a son will handle the great responsibilities of the job.

Occasionally in Hsin Hsing, pot masters have taken their responsibilities seriously enough to spend a great deal of their own money to refurbish an old and worn statue of the god. In one such instance, a

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756 463 776 makes himself readily available and is willing to perform. This is surely one reason for Er Shih Kung's growing popularity. This man, about thirty-four years of age, owns the village general store, does a little farming, and is the head of the Farmers' Association's village unit. In addition to these undertakings, he also takes an active part in all village events such as the coordination of village funeral arrangements.

756 554 621 The third *t'iao t'ung* for the less important village private god, Chu Wang Yeh, now has a vegetable stand in Taipei. His family still resides in the village, and he travels back and forth between the village and the city. However, he usually is not available in the village when his services are needed. On occasion, other Hsin Hsing villagers living in Taipei call upon him to help them communicate with the god.

It appears, then, that the two most active shamans in the village are the young *fa shih* and the *t'iao t'ung* for Er Shih Kung. These men apparently enjoy the popularity and increased contact with the villagers which their work affords them. At the same time, they undoubtedly recognize that their position in the community is enhanced each time they perform "a public service."

756 Any village man may become a *fa shih* if he is willing to devote time and energy to the intensive training involved in this undertaking. Master *fa shih* in Lukang or elsewhere are available as instructors. Under the tutelage of such a master, the novice learns how to conduct magical rituals and use potent charms and instruments of coercion with which he is able to exorcise malevolent demons or other spirits. 756 787 In addition, the novice is taught the "special language of the gods," which enables him to communicate with them through the medium of a *t'iao t'ung*.

The latter has the ability to go into a trance and become possessed by a particular local god who, when he enters the body of the *t'iao t'ung*, speaks to the people in his own tongue. Only the *fa shih* can interpret this special language. Supposedly the *t'iao t'ung* does not understand it, and, like Western mediums, he claims he is unaware of what has taken place while he was in the trance.

756 [776] The *t'iao t'ung* in the service of a local god is "chosen by that god" to serve him much as the god chooses his pot master. However, in this case, the candidates include only men who are interested in serving the god and the village, rather than representatives from all the village families. The prospective *t'iao t'ung* receives his training from, and is taught the god's language by, a master *fa shih* from Lukang. The training is conducted in complete secrecy and lasts for seven days.

Once the training is completed and the shaman is considered able to cope with the supernatural, he can be called upon to perform magical rituals when an illness strikes, particularly one which cannot be ex-

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plained easily or cured quickly by present-day medicine, or for any other problem in which the cause is believed to be supernatural.

The *t'iao t'ung* also sometimes deals in divination while in a trance. At such times the god speaking through him may, for example, give advance notice of future events such as the visit of a "guest god" from a distant area like the mainland of China or even some coming change in the life of a villager or in the village itself.

Perhaps the most important specialist in divination, however, is the geomancer. As we have noted earlier, he determines the auspicious time and place for important events like marriage, burial, or building a new house. He does this through the use of his special almanac, which is based on astrology, the conceptions of Yin-Yang, the Five Elements, and so on. The geomancer himself is usually an ordinary man, very often a farmer, whose divining activities are performed in his spare time for a small fee. He has generally been trained by an older geomancer, very often a relative. The training consists mainly in gaining a mastery of the uses of the almanac and in acquiring a familiarity with the formalities and proper sequences of the events which he must give advice about. One geomancer in Hsin Hsing village is scarcely literate, yet he has apparently mastered enough knowledge about his almanac's contents and the proper sequences of events to be employed frequently, especially in surrounding villages outside of Hsin Hsing. Hsin Hsing villagers, however, seem to prefer to call in an outside geomancer rather than to consult their own fellow villager. The villagers' awareness of the relative illiteracy of geomancers in general (who are nevertheless still called in for consultation) makes one suppose that the formal qualifications of the practitioner are less important than his acceptance as a recognized geomancer. His powers may not be considered to depend entirely on the amount of formal training he has had, or his function in relieving the members of the family from the responsibility of making a difficult decision may be sufficiently valued to make his actual qualifications unimportant in their eyes.

Other kinds of diviners, fortune-tellers, or people who are said to be able to communicate with the dead can be found in Lukang and other such towns and cities. Fortune-tellers are frequently itinerant, and occasionally pass through the villages offering their services.

When a fortune-teller happens to come through the village, it is not unlikely that he has heard that some family there has a problem in which a fortune-teller may be of assistance. In Hsin Hsing, for example, the very wealthy K'ang landlord family had nine daughters and two sons. Apparently, it was generally known that the family would like to give one daughter out for adoption, but was hesitating to do so for fear they would be criticized. It was at this point that a fortune-teller "happened" to come to the village and offer his service to the

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The puppet show and other communal expenses of the *pai-pai* are paid for with money collected from each village family by the pot master for Ta Shih Kung and his assistants, who also arrange for the show. Each village household is assessed an amount calculated on the basis of the amount of land operated (whether owned or rented) and the number of people in the household. The families of village shamans are not required to contribute any money on such occasions. In 1957 and 1958 all other households contributed NT $7 for each *chia* of land they worked, NT $1 for each male member of the household, and NT $0.50 for each female member. The approximate amount of village money spent for each of these annual celebrations of Ta Shih Kung's birthday was NT $1,150 (approximately US $32).

As the day's festivities draw to an end, the pot master gives an accounting of the expenditures which is accompanied by much arguing and accusations when a controversy arises over the way he handled the money or how the arrangements for the *pai-pai* were made. It seems to be usual for the sides of the controversy to be drawn along *tsu* lines. The final event of the day is the selection by lot of next year's pot master and his assistants. Some villagers watch the throwing of the blocks hopefully, wanting to be allowed to assume this position of honor and responsibility; others await the outcome nervously, hoping they will not be selected. If a man is chosen to be pot master or assistant, he has no option but to perform the job.

During the fifth and sixth months, the busy agricultural season, there are no important village *pai-pai* other than the usual four to worship the gods, their soldiers and horses, and the Good Brothers. Most festive holidays and calendrical rites fall in months when the farmers are not busy with agricultural chores. (See Figure 3.)

The fifteenth day of the seventh month, called Chung Yuan, the day when all the villagers worship the good brothers and Pu Tu Kung, the god in the underworld who watches over them, has already been discussed. The usual worship of the gods and their soldiers and horses on the fifteenth (and the first) of the month is omitted in the seventh month, however, since the gods are thought to be absent from the village while the Good Brothers are there.

The fifteenth day of the eighth month is the birthday of T'u Ti Kung, the Earth God. On this day the villagers hold a *pai-pai* at his temple which is located on the road in front of the village. Each village family worships individually with sacrifices of pork, vegetable dishes, and moon cakes (*yueh ping*). No guests are invited to dinner on this occasion. However, if a family has a hired man working for them, it is customary to invite him to share the meal.

In the ninth month there are no special *pai-pai*, but around the middle of the tenth month, the village has one of its largest joint *pai-*

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t'ing with steamed round dough cakes and other simple sacrifices. Some families also worship at the village Earth God temple, and others go to the Matsu temple in Lukang.

The sixteenth day of the twelfth month is called Wei Ya and is the last day of the year on which the Good Brothers are worshipped by each family. On this day the villagers also go to the Earth God temple to ask T'u Ti Kung to protect their livestock. The average family does not have guests to dinner, but landlords are supposed to invite their hired men to eat on this occasion. Traditionally, this day has been the one on which it is decided whether or not the worker is to continue in the employ of the landlord for the coming year.

By the twenty-fourth day of the twelfth month, as already indicated, the villagers begin to prepare for the New Year's celebration by sending the gods off to heaven.

Noncyclic Rites

Most clearly classifiable as noncyclic rites of passage (crisis rites) are those associated with life-cycle events (described in Chapter 7) such as the ceremonies held at a birth, on a boy's sixteenth birthday, upon marriage, and at death. Though they are rites of passage, they function also as rites of intensification, since they draw together family and *tsu* groups, including *ch'in ch'i* and friends from the surrounding area, and often large segments of the village.

Functioning similarly are the times when a villager is seriously ill or when young men are being sent off for military service. While both situations are of immediate concern only to a particular family, the entire village may be requested to participate in a *pai-pai* and offer its prayers and sacrifices for the well-being of each person thus endangered. In case of a serious illness, the patient's family requests the villagers' participation by sounding a gong at dawn of the day on which the *pai-pai* is to be held. It would be rare for any village family (no matter what its relationship with the sponsoring family) to be unwilling to participate.

Still another noncyclic *pai-pai* which clearly functions as a rite of intensification rather than a rite of passage occurs when a god from some distant place comes to the village for an unscheduled visit. The villagers may be notified of the impending visit by a local god speaking through a shaman (*t'iao t'ung*) while he is in a trance. On the day of the announced visit, the entire village holds a joint *pai-pai* to welcome and worship the god. The occasion may become a regular *pai-pai* event as a result of the shaman's earlier announcement and may eventually become a part of the village's regular cyclic calendar of rituals.

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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158 159 755 [756] [782] The girl was eventually brought back to the village to live, and it was during the period of one attack that I was able to observe the techniques used to deal with the disturbance. Over a period of weeks a series of *t'iao t'ung* were called in an attempt to determine the cause of the problem. After each visit by a *t'iao t'ung*, a *fa shih* was employed and every time some more powerful master *fa shih* was called upon. Finally, the family of the girl asked the entire village to take part in a *pai-pai* in order to ask the gods to help. Four or five weeks after the onset of the attack the girl's symptoms seemed to disappear, and she resumed her normal village life. The only explanation the villagers could offer for the recovery was that perhaps the powers of the shaman, combined with the help elicited from the gods, rid the girl of the demons which possessed her.

Other Forms of Magical Activities

731 62 787 789 756 In addition to the healing rituals, there are other magical activities frequently carried on in the Hsin Hsing village area. When a village house catches fire, prodigious energy is expended on rituals to rid the village of the menacing "fire spirit" or "demon" usually believed to have caused the conflagration. On one such occasion, a *t'iao t'ung* was called in to help the villagers find out how to safeguard the rest of the village from fire, and a *fa shih* was called upon to exorcise the malevolent demon. The fire spirit ritual was held late at night, and practically the whole village turned out to watch the proceedings. The *t'iao t'ung*, assisted by about seven other men, held a large wooden chair which was normally used to seat the statues of the gods during processions, such as that held for Matsu. At the *t'iao t'ung's* initiative, the men began to shake the chair as an invitation for the god to come and sit in it. Gradually, the *t'iao t'ung* went into a trance, and while the god was trying to take his seat in the chair, the men shook it more and more violently, so that it appeared to take the strength of all of them to hold on to it. Once the god was seated in the chair the shaking diminished. At this point the *t'iao t'ung*, possessed by the god, began to chant. A *fa shih* was present to record the god's words, which told the people how they could get rid of the fire spirit and protect the other village houses. The god directed the people to appease the demon by burning paper money in different parts of the village and also advised them to place protective charms on each house. These charms were made by the *fa shih* who had been called upon to exorcise the demon.

By the light of several lanterns and torches, the villagers, the *t'iao t'ung*, and the *fa shih* began to proceed through the village as directed. At intervals during this march, a man carrying the chair suddenly would become possessed by the god. Eventually, all these men became

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5

possessed and uncontrollably violent. They writhed and reeled and pulled the chair in different directions. At times the sheer weight of the moving chair caused them to fall to the ground in a heap. Villagers who had come to witness the ritual ran for cover for fear of being trampled by the frenzied men or struck by the chair they wielded. Finally, when the entire route had been covered, the god took his leave, and the men came out of their trances. Many of them bore bruises caused by their many falls under the heavy chair.

The villagers look forward to such exciting occasions and talk about them long after they are past. The exploits of the *t'iao t'ung* are a common topic of discussion among the villagers, and some consider them capable of performing superhuman acts while possessed. The magnificent feats of the *t'iao t'ung* in the old days are commonly recounted, and people admit that there are only a few *t'iao t'ung* in the area who now possess really unusual powers.

Of the magical rituals and shamanistic feats discussed by villagers, one of the most unusual is a feat performed by a *t'iao t'ung* while in a trance walking barefoot on hot coals without being harmed. The villagers note that few *t'iao t'ung* attempt this anymore. Some villagers claim that the *t'iao t'ung* used to walk on water. A young man related a story to me and several villagers about a *t'iao t'ung* who, while in a trance, had tried this several years earlier. Everyone present dissolved into fits of hysterical laughter at the last line of the tale—"When the *t'iao t'ung* tried to walk on the water he went under and was drowned."

However, there are certain classic feats which are performed successfully by the *t'iao t'ung* today. One of the most common is for a possessed *t'iao t'ung* to "cut his head open with a sword" without seriously harming himself. Commonly, this is done at a ceremonial called "taking water," which is performed only once in several years by any particular village, though within the immediate area each year there is usually one village which holds it. A *t'iao t'ung*, while possessed by a god, informs the villagers that they must schedule this ceremony for a specific date at a certain river. On the appointed day, most of the male villagers accompany the *t'iao t'ung* to the river, which may be several miles away. At the river, the *t'iao t'ung* goes into a trance and blindly staggers into the water. All the villagers run into the water after him. He is handed a sword with which he cuts his forehead, and the other men push his head to the surface of the water, allowing his blood to mix with the river water. Since the *t'iao t'ung* is possessed by the god his blood is sacred, and when it mixes with the water, the water is considered holy. At the moment of consecration, the villagers frantically fill the kettles, bottles, and barrels which they have brought with them. The water is carried home and used for its

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5

"curative and health-giving powers." Although the villagers of the Hsin Hsing area realize the importance of boiling drinking water, they will drink this holy water immediately after taking it out of the river and claim that they suffer no ill effects.

When the villagers have filled their receptacles, they depart for their own village. The *t'iao t'ung*, who is still in a trance, is carried on the top of a large sedan chair ordinarily used to transport the statues of gods. On his head is a large bandage. Although he has suffered only a superficial wound, the *t'iao t'ung's* actually cutting his head with a sword is impressive to the observers, since the blood flow increases when he dips his head into the water. All along the route homeward other villagers, already informed of the ceremonial, display sacrifices to the god who possesses the *t'iao t'ung* and bring out bottles and kettles in which to receive some of the holy water that is being transported in large barrels.

THE FUNCTIONS OF RITUAL IN HSIN HSING VILLAGE

Having examined the occasion and occurrence of many rites and rituals, we turn now to ways in which they function within the structure of village society and support it. Generally, their most obvious contribution is that participation in the ritual itself helps to relieve the anxiety of people who are desperately seeking to survive in a world of uncertainty or looking for solutions to otherwise insoluble problems. This is true whether the ritual is designed for protection or to moderate natural or supernatural disaster—illness, fire, or demonic possession—since at the very least the villager feels he is coming to grips with the problem. Other results of ritual are less obvious.

Curing rites, for example, resemble all medical practices in having useful side effects or fringe benefits beyond the actually therapeutic. Not only the patient but the whole family must be considered. The Chinese cultural focus on the family emphasizes the reciprocal responsibility of family and individual. Thus, a Taiwanese family must take advantage of every possible means to cure an ailing member or be looked down upon and criticized by the entire community for neglect, which increases the anxiety of the situation.

Therefore, when Western medicine does not work, the traditional-minded villagers turn at once to the shaman, feeling that the very failure proves that the illness is of supernatural origin. But even the skeptical families which have no firm belief in the potency of the magical rituals usually have them performed. This may be partly to avoid social censure, but, in fact, not even the most skeptical are entirely convinced that the rituals are ineffectual. Such villagers have been heard to say, "perhaps the ritual does help. And could one allow

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5

shaman's magic. The awe and shock which he inspires in the patient could have actual therapeutic value, at least to the extent of bringing about temporary relief if not recovery, and may not be too dissimilar to the effect of electric shock. And fear of the "shock treatment," in either case, may provide as beneficial a result as actual recourse to the treatment.

A social function of ritual, and especially of shamanistic types of ritual, might be briefly considered here. This is its "entertainment" value in rural areas. Frequently, large numbers of people turn out to witness curing or fire rituals, which may last long into the night. They almost always regard the shaman's performance as an exciting event. Many attempt to become participants, and some in their enthusiasm and excitement may even become possessed. Most participate by merely presenting sacrifices. Frequently, large crowds come from surrounding villages to watch the often "amazing feats" carried out in the course of some shamanistic rites. In this process of drawing together for an exciting ritual event, the people gain a strong—if temporary—feeling of social cohesion. Even later, the rituals give the villagers an interesting topic to discuss and gossip about for many days. Thus, although there is little formal entertainment in rural Taiwan, the ritual act often serves to fill its place.

Even though these rituals are performed by so many villagers, it does not particularly indicate absolute faith in the supernatural. While a great number of old people still hold these beliefs without reservations, today most of the villagers express some degree of uncertainty. Generally, villagers say that "many *t'iao t'ung* are not as powerful as they used to be, and also there are some who are probably fakes, but who can really tell?" (This is a point frequently made in the past by the Japanese when they ruled Taiwan and again today by the present government through the school system.) In addition, the villagers ask, "Who can really know if the *t'iao t'ung* is possessed by a god and speaking the god's words?" But all the villagers "know from experience that life is hard," and they constantly seek ways to temper this harshness. Although their faith may not be absolute, they "would not dare merely to sit and do nothing" when a sick member of the family showed no improvement, or a child neither ate nor slept for days, or a fire destroyed someone's house. They are anxious, and their continued recourse to magical or religious rituals represents their attempt to do everything possible to allay their apprehension of the unknown.

Thus, even the most skeptical of the villagers will call on a shaman in an emergency. Though the importance of Western medicine has reduced the old primary reliance on ritual curing, social pressure as well as the desire to do everything possible if one method fails forces

of the five lún, while the Shang Ti Kung stands for the unity of all of Chichou.

The fifteen minute walk from the train station in Hsulin to the village of Hsiachichou takes one through the main business street of the market town. Here under the arcades which edge the street are a variety of small stores and shops which cater to the material and spiritual needs of the surrounding villages. There is a small shop selling ice and a variety of cold drinks, a western style drug store advertising everything from aspirin to penicillin, next door to this a traditional Chinese drug store famous for its cures for consumption, the tiny office of a local doctor trained in Japan, a dry goods store specializing in ready made western clothing, a tailor who scorns western clothing, a coffin shop sweet with the cool smell of camphor, a small two story hotel which also functions as a brothel, several food stores pungent with the odors of garlic and salted cabbage, a photography shop displaying pictures of Japanese and American movie stars, a pool hall where young village men come to play billiards at night, a variety store selling mostly children's copybooks and writing materials, a dusty mill full of sacks of grain, two family shops making noodles for local restaurants, a fortune teller's stall run by a man disabled in the Second World War, a three or four room hospital which serves as a prison for the violently insane, and at the end of the street a Tu Ti Kung Temple supported by the local businessmen and their families. To know this street is to know a great deal about the life of the local population.

592 family. As long as they constitute a single kê, or "family," a man
354 and his brothers and sons will always use the same stove, but as soon as the kê is divided new stoves must be constructed. The division of a single kê into several new units is, in fact, most commonly referred to in Hsiachichou as "the separation of the stove." The stove is both the symbol and the locus of the kê, and it is inconceivable that two families should use the same stove. So strong is this identity of stove and family that great care must be taken lest the family suffer as a result of the character of the stove. The location of the stove, the timing of its construction, and its general condition are all thought of as being intimately related to the fate of the kê. When one village family learned from a shaman that "there were ants and other things in their stove," they demolished the structure and threw the bricks into the river. One of their neighbors explained, "There was nothing else they could do. A family will never have peace if it does not have a good stove."

341 Although the new village house is usually built with fairly spacious
342 dimensions, no village family would be satisfied to see their home re-
596 main a simple rectangular structure. Their hope is always that their sons and grandsons will marry and remain a part of the parental household, and that as a result the house will be expanded to meet the needs of an expanded family. An explicit manifestation of this hope is to be seen in the design of the new house. In addition to the large entrance which leads into the kông-thiâ:, the front wall of the house will always include two smaller doors, one at each end of the house.

584 match she is suggesting. The go-between is called in for consultation; relatives and friends are queried for any information they may be able to provide; and the other party's house and property are carefully surveyed for signs of prestige and prosperity. One informant told us jokingly that having a daughter reach marriageable age was like putting your house up for sale. Nor are more esoteric sources of information
584 neglected. The women of the family will always submit any marriage
787 proposal for the approval of the gods, and sometimes a family will hire a shaman in order to obtain a more reliable estimate of the advisability of a match. So sensitve are many families to the need for favorable supernatural signs that any unnatural or untoward event may result in the rejection of a particular marriage proposal. During the period we were living in Hsiachichou one woman rejected a proposed match for her daughter "because all of our chickens died suddenly and for no apparent reason. How can one expect a marriage to turn out well if the gods are not in its favor?"

Should both of the families turn out to be satisfied with their inquiries, the first public step toward the completion of the match will then be undertaken. This is the so-called "matching of the eight characters." Through the medium of the go-between the two families exchange slips of red paper on which are set out the time, day, month, and year of the bride's and of the groom's birth. These data are then submitted by each family to a fortune teller who interprets the information to determine whether or not the two parties to the marriage are compatible. Although a fortune teller will occasionally give a negative

584 answer to such an inquiry, a marriage will seldom founder at this
787 point. If one fortune taller gives an unfavorable response, a family will sacrifice to a god or to their ancestors, and then consult a second fortune teller; and the rules of the fortune teller's art are not so carefully defined as to preclude a favorable response. When a family is still undecided about the advisability of any particular match, magical considerations may deter them, but once they have decided that a match is good they are not likely to be dissuaded by supernatural indications. The "matching of the eight characters" is perhaps best understood as a public determination of what both families have already discovered to be the case in private.

584 After the exchange of the "eight characters" the marriage negotia-
583 tions enter their most difficult stage. The arrangement of the preferred patrilocal marriage in Hsiachichou involves the exchange of a variety of gifts. Some time prior to the engagement the groom's family must send to the future bride several pieces of gold jewelry, and at the time of the engagement they must provide her family with cakes to distribute to friends and relatives as a means of announcing the marriage. More importantly, the groom's family is required by custom to pay a bride price "to thank the girl's family for raising her," and the bride's family must respond by preparing a dowry to accompany their daughter to her new home. The negotiation of the values of these various gifts requires all the skills of the most gifted go-between, and it is one these shoals that the careers of the less adept founder and end in disaster. The typical villager sees both his fortune and

3: Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien
Taiwan AD6

Across the square a narrow, unpaved alley twists past a coffin shop, smelling incongruously fresh and spring-like from the fragrant sandalwood; it makes another turn at the legless fortune teller's shop, passes a few houses, and abruptly disappears in the open, shimmering rice paddies.

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[764]
[795]

3: Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Peihotien

wife. He wants the security of a stable and permanent network of human relations.

The farm houses of Taiwan are symbolic of this attitude toward the family. In Taipei and in the larger market towns there have always been houses designed for rental income, houses for transients who may stay a month or ten years, but they are barren houses designed only for the present occupants and not looking toward the future. In the country, even today, when a man builds a house he follows the old pattern. He builds with a vision of housing under one roof a large and prosperous family of many generations. Farmers are rarely wealthy on Taiwan. Although they are just as likely as anyone else to try to implement their dreams, they do so with a shrewd practicality. Instead of hoarding gold or borrowing money to build the huge U-shaped structure that is to house generations as yet unborn, they build the base of their future, a strong rectangular building. At each end of the rectangle, however, there are indications of the ultimate design—an unnecessary door, a carefully made archway clumsily boarded over until the day it will open into a new wing housing the family of a son or a grandson. The rectangle becomes first an L and finally a U whose arms may be extended again and again.

That part of Peihotien that lies upstream is often referred to as "Brick House Place," a designation that has survived from the building of the first all-brick house. Before that, houses were built of mud over bamboo wattling and roofed with rice thatch. A family who could tear down one of their mud walls and replace it with strong red bricks showed a sign of prosperity; their continuing good fortune could be seen in the replacement of another wall a few years later. Now only unimportant buildings like pig pens or storage rooms have mud walls and all of the thatch has been replaced with shining tile roofs. There are mud houses left in the other villages of Hotien, but Peihotien exhibits its superiority in a rich display of red brick. Nowadays a new house begins in brick and tile.

The first step a family takes toward building a new house is to summon a geomancer. He is shown the family land and is expected to site the house in the position most favorable to the natural and supernatural phenomena. Evidently these variables are fairly uniform in a small area for nearly all of the houses of Peihotien face in the same direction, away from the river—sad from the point of view of Western aesthetics but undoubtedly well justified in terms of geomancy. Before

3: Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Peihotien

any construction begins, the family and the geomancer make careful enquiries of priests, the elderly, even the gods, to be sure that the house is not placed on the site of an old temple or shrine. Indignant gods could bring untold misery on the family for generations. When construction is underway, the geomancer supervises the building of the ritually important cooking stove, a large, square, brick structure which is intimately tied to the welfare of the family. If it is clumsily built, or improperly oriented, misfortune or even death may come to family members. The family must also prevent those who bear them ill will from secretly inserting dangerous magical objects in the partially constructed stove. If the carpenters and bricklayers are ill-paid or disrespectfully treated, they too might practice various forms of witchcraft on the stove or on the main roof beam. The welfare of the family in both the present and the future generations is irrevocably involved in the construction of their home.

The original rectangle of a new rural home may vary somewhat in size, floor plan, or interior decoration, but the basic outline is the same for all. In the center of the front wall of each house are double doors which open into the guest hall. In most houses the floor of the guest hall is of beaten earth, the same as the other rooms of the house, but in more affluent homes the hall is distinguished by a concrete floor. The one village home with concrete floors throughout displays a terrazzo floor in the guest hall. This room is the stage on which a family presents itself to the world. Here one often finds a scroll of unexpected quality and such luxuries as a radio or a sewing machine; here also are the material representations of the family's charter, their ancestral tablets. These are flat, rectangular slips of wood, rounded on the top like grave stones, each inscribed in black ink with the posthumous name of a deceased member of the family. In every home these are arranged on a tall, narrow altar table set against the wall opposite the front door. To the foreign eye this altar is a clutter of religious paraphernalia, but there is order here if not neatness. The gods take precedence over the ancestors and their images are thus always to the right of the altar; men take precedence over women and thus the tablets of men are always to the right of those of their wives. Where the tablets are arranged in a small lacquer box, the more recently deceased are at the front of the box; where they are arranged on open shelves, the most distant ancestors stand on the top of the shelf at the head of a pyramid.

Individually, the tables have little significance. They are simply

3:Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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159 291 over 70. Around the village she wears dark cotton pants, hemmed to a clumsy level between ankle and knee, and a white Mandarin smock, sleeveless in summer and long-sleeved in winter. For her infrequent trips to Tapu or nearby temples, she wears dark Mandarin-collared dresses cut so loosely and with such decorous side slits that their generic relationship with the fashionable, clinging cheong-sam of 159 302 Hongkong is questionable. Her hair is parted in the middle and pulled tightly back into a neat knot low on her neck. It is rarely disordered even in the roughest of farm work because (much to the horror of my modern minded interpreter) she keeps a heavy coating of fat on it.

596 159 782 769 [115] Lim A-pou's extraordinary old-fashionedness, or devotion to tradition, is not limited to her dress. I found her, as do many of her neighbors, an excellent informant on ancient home remedies, rituals for placating household gods and ghosts, techniques for protecting pregnant women, and for purifying rooms following childbirth. Part of her conflict with her late husband's younger brother, Lim Chieng-cua, results from his introduction of more economical practices in the ceremonies honoring the ancestors. Many families on Taiwan now combine the ceremonies celebrating their more distant ancestors' birth and death days, presenting the expensive offerings of meat and fowl to them all on the same day, rather than repeating the expense for [776] each on their specific anniversary. Besides this, Lim Chieng-cua also abolished the bi-monthly offerings to Tu Ti Kung—a less expensive ceremony but one that has not been celebrated in many households for decades. A-pou bitterly resented these omissions and continued to offer an apologetic bit of incense each night and morning to preserve 159 753 776 what to her was at least a semblance of propriety. When Lim Chieng-cua installed the new pump in the house without consulting the almanac, A-pou was angry for days. According to the almanac, the [787] Placenta God was resting in that particular room on that particular day. Through Lim Chieng-cua's negligence, the little god was disturbed or injured, and he took his vengeance on A-pou's grandson in the form of a high fever. Before the fever was finally controlled with an injection of penicillin, Lim Chieng-cua and his nephew, the father of the child, had to endure a week of foul humor, both of them alarmed by the illness and neither of them believing in A-pou's theory of causation.

159 596 Due to the indiscretion of the only other person who knew of the event, I learned of Lim A-pou's one lapse from rigid respectability.

342 in winter.

351 Most of the dwellings of farmers have a pounded
[243 earth courtyard for drying rice and as a place to work.
[474 Recently, the farmers' association has provided half the cement necessary to cover the courtyard and many villagers have taken advantage of the offer, the first in 1961. Borrowing the use of a cemented courtyard is now quite
343 common. Farm outbuildings such as pig pens are extremely crude with only partial walls and a thatch roof.

342 A dwelling typically has a regular sequence of development. The first step is a rectangle 15 feet deep and 20 or more feet wide. The main room will be the kung t'ing which is a combination of sitting, dining, ancestral worship, and general main room in the house. The usual room dimensions are a 15 foot depth and a width of 10 or 15 feet. Extended out on either side are other rooms, each 10 or 15 feet wide. Such rooms will be added as needed until the building is three or five rooms long with the kung t'ing in the center accessed through a central door. One of the rooms is a kitchen but if there are only two rooms, the kitchen may be a temporary attached leanto.

• 787 It is best to have a geomancer orient the house for good luck (see Chapter VII). Many people skip this step by copying the orientation of nearby houses although this is contrary to the theory of geomancy (ti-li or feng-shui).

• 787 Several villagers have some knowledge of ti-li standards which are considered sufficient for houses but a professional geomancer is usually consulted to orient the stove.

787 Normally, geomancy is referred to as feng shui (literally, 192 wind and water) with respect to orienting graves. Ti-li 761 is an alternative expression which refers to the activi- 354 ties of the same man (geomancer) when he is engaged in activities not related to death. There is some reluctance to connect the stove, for instance, with death. Nevertheless, both terms are sometimes used for the stove or house but only feng-shui is used for graves or temples.

342 As more space is needed in the house, ten-foot wings are extended at right angles from each end of the main section on the side of the building with the kung t'ing door. Each added room is about 10' by 10'. The wings may eventually become five or six rooms long. The long-range aim is a "u-shaped" building with a courtyard in the central partially enclosed area. Several village dwelling units have reached this stage (One is illustrated in Figure 12). Others may assume the shape of an "L" before the last wing is added (A distribution of various shapes can easily be seen in Figure 2). Since the large "u-shaped" building is predicated on the basis it will be occupied by a single kinship group, many buildings never complete the full development cycle as families do not expand as expected. The most modern houses of concrete,

794 778 778 794 623 temple is the central focus for various religious festivals that punctuate the yearly cycle. There is a major temple committee, selected by a process of consensus, consisting of the senior and most respected men in the community. The committee is in charge of a small plot of paddy land, the income from which goes to support the temple caretaker. The committee is also responsible for the maintenance of the temple and for coordination of temple affairs.

796 794 624 [788] Those religious affairs which are regular, occurring on a standard date each year, are not managed by the major temple committee. Rather, each chia chang or his representative comes to the temple and casts the shen pei[3] with its falls interpreted as a yes or no. Whoever obtains the most yes votes before receiving a no is the Lu Chu (pot master) in charge of the next event. He has assistant potmasters on the special committee, one from each lin (legal subdivision of the village) chosen in the same [562] manner. Potmasters have never been female but females have been permitted to cast the sticks to attempt the office and females are often assistant potmasters.[4]

796 62 794 The special committee is responsible for planning the scheduled event and raising the money to pay for it. If no one on the committee is experienced, a member of the major temple committee is usually added as an ex officio member.[5] A special committee will meet six or seven times for planning purposes, the members sounding

some in observance of a promise made to the gods for fulfilling some previous request.

On the interior wall of the temple is a bulletin board topped by an engraved history of the temple and list of donations for its construction. A report of collections and expenditures for the preceding religious event is posted in descending order by amount of donation per household. In this manner, the gods are advised of contributions and every resident and visitor to the community may learn who is important in the village, i.e., the larger the donation, the higher the status.

There are two regular means to question the gods. One method involves use of the shen pei which look rather like they were made from a short blunt banana sliced in two lengthwise. After asking a question accompanied by appropriate ritual, the shen pei are dropped on the floor from chest level. There are two falls interpreted as yes and two as no, thus yielding a fifty per cent success probability. The second method of questioning gods involves randomly selecting a fortune stick from a vase. Matching the stick is a fortune on a set of tablets but all fortunes are rather ambiguous and subject to conflicting interpretations.

There is no regular priest attached to the temple nor is it on a route of a visiting circuit of priests for the temple is a religious center complete unto itself.

There is no permanent individual in charge of the temple which belongs to the entire community. Each particular festival has a lu chu (pot master) in charge and a committee of assistant pot masters, one from each of the six village lin, all chosen by the gods through casting the shen pei. Whoever obtains the most "yes" answers before his first "no" is considered to have been selected by the gods for the position. The last part of any yearly event requires casting the shen pei to determine the next year's committee. Since there are two major regular events each year plus periodic special affairs, each requiring a unique committee of seven, many villagers are involved in temple committees at any particular moment in time.

Women have never been the pot master but they have regularly been assistant pot masters. Gallin claims this is an unusual role for women in the Chang-hua area in which he worked (personal communication). Sanlei villagers believe it is natural because the pot masters and assistant pot masters are said to be selected solely by the gods. Eligible candidates who cast the shen pei include all village chia chang (household heads) and since the chia chang are usually males, the unusualness may be deceiving. That is, female lu chu may be rare only because female chia chang are relatively rare and not because there is some normative bias against female lu chu. As previously stated, female chia chang are more numerous in Sanlei than

776 policemen. The originations of gods are diverse, some were pure spirits and some were real historical figures who have been deified. As stated by Gamble for North China and true for all China, "Buddhism, Taoism, Official, and individual cults have influenced each other, borrowed from each other, and imitated each other" (1963:400). Certain gods are associated with certain purposes, i.e., they have functional specificity. However, across China as a whole there is a great deal of regional variability. "Even for certain national cults, the names and at times the functions of the same god vary from place to place" (C. K. Yang, 1961:10-11).

[532] There are 30 god's statues in the Sanlei temple. The names of all but two[3] are known by some villagers but only a few villagers could name the 28. On the average, men know more names than women and old people know more than the young. For some of the popular gods, everyone in the village knew the name, even small children. Associated with each known god is a story. The oldest temple god was brought to the village from Fukien with the original group of migrants while others have been installed periodically; some have been acquired out of surplus funds collected for a general festival; some have been donated by sworn brothers associations; and some have been donated by individuals.

776 • 787 During our study, a part-time miner was visited by a god in a dream who informed him not to go to work in the mine

anymore. The next day, there was a cave-in which killed a miner from Erhlei Ts'un. The part-time miner was sure the god had saved him so he obtained a statue of the god, installed it in the temple, and pledged to worship it daily for the rest of his life. Although the history of the acquisition of many statues is known, much has been lost and as stated earlier, two of the statutes are completely unknown, even their names.

The statues in the temple are called gods because they are more than a mere symbolic representation, they actually possess some essence of the god himself, acquired by being made by special craftsmen and by being placed with appropriate rituals next to other gods in special temples for a period of time. Temple gods may become contaminated by various means such as by the close approach of a person in mourning or a menstruating woman. When contaminated, they lose much of their power but there are appropriate rituals to cleanse them.

Gods are both males and females and probably the most popular single god in China is Kuan-yin, the so called Goddess of Mercy (L. Thompson, 1969:56). In Taiwan and Fukien, one of the most popular gods is Matsu, another female, around whom a major celebration is dedicated each year in Sanlei. The importance of females in the pantheon of gods is consistent with the arguments presented in this paper with regard to the role of women in Chinese society.

village itself. Each differs in the types of powers he possesses and/or the rituals he performs while two of the same type may have different qualitative ratings. Some specialists charge a fee for services and others depend on gifts. Nothing will be said directly if the gift is too small, but the practitioner will not return the next time he is called. Everyone knows what amount constitutes a proper gift. For the most part, the community has established rather permanent relations with certain individuals who have a regular practice in the area.

One significant type of practice involves specialists in feng shui (literally wind and water but usually termed geomancy). Geomancy is related to the Yin (negative) and Yang (positive) factors and the Five Elements: water, metal, fire, earth, and wood (Burkhardt, 1953:129-33). "Geomancy deals with the supernatural relation of geographical locations to human events" (C. K. Yang, 1967b:263). Certain geographical locations have influence on human life, negative or positive. These factors are especially important with regard to the location of tombs, building sites, and the kitchen stove. Almost all village adults are amateur geomancers, i.e., they possess rudimentary knowledge of significant elements. Moreover, villagers believe they can generalize from previous events. For instance, a house may be built right next door to a geomancer-directed house without professional consultation

by duplicating the orientation. Since there are family burial plots, geomancers are not always used for additional burials.

The most frequent call for a geomancer to come to Sanlei is to orient the kitchen stove. Sanlei villagers usually consult a geomancer from Pouti but occasionally employ a more expensive one from Hsin Tien. Although the literature mentions relocation of ancestral graves if a family has great misfortune, this has not happened in Sanlei but about twenty years ago, one family removed a rock near a tomb and planted three trees as directed by a geomancer who was called as a consultant after much misfortune.

As previously stated, Talei Li has many excellent sites for tombs with powerful feng shui coordinates. Two of the most famous geomancers in Taipei have purchased many of these sites. They then select them for clients and also sell the sites to the clients and make a profit both on the sale and as a consultant. One village mason and two village women earn a significant part of their incomes helping erect the elaborate tombs.

Shamans of various kinds are still consulted for illnesses although villagers believe the frequency is declining. Three different men, all from nearby villages, are called in periodically. However, trips are also made to the consulting rooms of two others, a ching tsao hsien

(master of green grass) in Hsin Tien and a mi fang hsien (master of secret remedies) in Taipei. Shamans usually appear to be consulted with reference to illnesses which are psychosomatic in nature or those which are relatively hopeless, i.e., medical advice has not worked. This latter may be merely because sufficient time for medical treatment to take effect has not elapsed. If someone is sick, many kinds of practitioners may be consulted quickly, both medical and religious. Serious illness in children, male and female alike, stimulates the call for a shaman quicker than would identical symptoms in adults. Shamans are rarely used for old people (beyond age 60) who have not been vigorous recently because after 60, death is considered inevitable and any years granted beyond 60 were only due to the favor of the gods. With a terminal illness, the family patiently waits for death without treatment.

Some of the temples in Hsin Tien and Taipei have priests such as Tao jen (Men of the tao). Priests are consulted with reference to the suitability of a pair for marriage (kan ming hsien) and also for illness (hung t'ou Taoist). Curing involves a procedure much like that described for the fortune sticks in the village temple except the stick specifies a potion to be consumed instead of a fortune. Priests themselves do not have the specific personal powers of shamans but do have the ability to perform proper rituals. Two part-time hei t'ou (Black-headed

793 [764] Taoist priests) from Pouti officiate at almost all village funerals.

791 There are various other kinds of magicians, diviners, fortune tellers, etc., who are occasionally used by Sanlei 787 villagers. Coins, grains of rice, palm reading, and a pile of sticks are all used for predictions and explanations. The eight characters of birth (hour, day, month, year) are important both in predicting the future and determining [777] suitability of marriage partners. Astrology is well developed and the calendric cycle of good and bad days is everywhere evident.

796 793 Two part-time hung tou (red-headed Taoist priests) from Hsin Tien participate at many big ceremonies in the 796 village and li. Finally, one particular part-time shaman, 791 a fa shih and his assistant from over the mountain were 465 frequently hired for certain ceremonies. Perhaps the term hired is too strong for no fee was ever discussed when an invitation was extended but the fa shih always received a sizable gift for officiating, the equivalent of a week's pay for an experienced farm laborer, plus elaborate food.

791 This man has the ability to inspire others to go into 787 trances and then he can interpret what they say if they "speak in tongues" or read the "spirit characters" a man in a trance may write in sand which is spread in a fine layer on a table.

4:Barnett E-4,5 (1965-1967) 1970 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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183 791 787 There is a final kind of service that religious practitioners provide for community residents although few villagers would be likely to admit it explicitly, i.e., they provide justification for social acts which might be contrary to community standards or which might otherwise create difficulties in interpersonal relations. For instance, assume a family wants to give up a daughter in adoption but also does not want to create an impression that they are releasing her because the family can not afford her support. If a shaman of some kind orders the adoption, the family can accomplish it without censure by claiming the gods wishes must be obeyed. Someone can be found to interpret the god's desires in a manner so that anything and everything can be justified.

A Fire Purification Ceremony

796 783 As an extended case study, I will present an account of a non-cyclical but important religious event held in [171] Sanlei in November of 1966. The ceremony was entitled the "Fire Purification of the Gods" and differs only in minor details from that described by DeGroot for Mainland China (1892-1910). The essential part of the ceremony is ritual purification of the gods by carrying them through a fire of god's paper money in sedan chairs carried by bearers who are ritually clean and have no foot coverings.

[171] 184 [178] Similar ceremonies have occurred throughout Taiwan periodically with strong evidence they have increased in

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796 people therefore felt that the ceremony was not really
573 theirs. One sworn brother explained that he got the idea
621 and started the whole process because of a ceremony he attended at a village near Hsin Tien.

The three sworn brothers associations had originally
[624] planned to conduct the "tail" in the same manner. However, after many discussions over a period of time lasting nearly a year, it was decided to handle it in nearly the same manner as most ceremonies except that the committee would not only include a pot master and an assistant from each of the six lin, but one assistant from each of the
[787] three sworn brothers associations. One of the ten com-
[562] mittee members was a female, selected by the gods in the usual way by casting the shen pei.

783 In the meantime, the temple committee for the Erhlei
796 temple, the temple which actually encompassed all Talei Li,
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632 decided they could not let the Sanlei temple get too far ahead because the li temple was supposedly higher in rank. They therefore planned a "Fire Purification Ceremony" of their own. It would be a much more elaborate one-occasion type falling between the Sanlei "head" and "tail" ceremonies.

621 The first task of the Sanlei committee was to select
632 a date. This was not an easy task for the date had to be
783 auspicious, not too close to other religious holidays, not
794 too close to the li Fire Purification Ceremony, and during
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783 in the ceremony the previous year but both neophyte and
796 veteran were frightened for they knew they would eventually walk through a fire and all truly felt they would probably be burned. They had ritually prepared for the
[834] ceremony. All were supposed to have refrained from sexual intercourse for twenty-four hours, taken a thorough hot bath the night before, and washed their feet again in the morning in the temple just before coming to the field.

Upon a signal given by the fa shih in charge, the sedan chairs were hoisted to the men's shoulders and would
[534] not be lowered for about four hours. Two older village men carried eight-inch gongs which they beat as they walked about the field, frequently closely approaching the bearers and banging the gongs especially loudly in their ears. The shaman carried long heavy incense sticks which released thick smoke and a pungent odor. He walked from bearer to bearer, waving the sticks in their faces and whispering in
783 their ears. After a half hour in the hot sun, some of the
• 787 chairs started to sway, to lurch forward two or three
796 steps, and to return back into line. One set of men stumbled and bumped into the group next to them. One of the men in front on a four-man chair started to tremble, his eyes were closed, and then he took off running in a wide circle, his three fellow bearers struggling to keep the chair balanced. He was "possessed by the gods." Following quickly beside the chair were the two gong-beaters

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787 and the shaman who helped guide the chair so that it would strike other chairs. It is believed that "possession" is contagious and by touching chairs, perhaps more people would become possessed. If the touching is rather vigorous, the transfer process is more likely.

Before long, all six chairs with their respective crews were involved, dashing about here and there. Since most of the villagers were in the same field, they too had to dash about avoiding flying sedan chairs. A few villagers got knocked down and some bearers were severely bruised as chairs crashed into each other. We did note that at no time did any chair run into the table in the center of the field and at no time did it appear that all members of a single crew were in a trance simultaneously.

Follow-up interviews afterwards revealed that all but four men felt that they had been in trances at some time during the day. Some felt that they were always aware of what was happening but had no control over it which they described as similar to when a man had too much to drink. Other men stated that periods were completely blank with no memory at all of what had happened. Most men had several trances, none seemingly exceeding ten minutes in duration.

After about an hour, a chair halted in front of the table and lines were marked in the sand with one of the poles used to carry it, but the shaman said the lines made no sense. Character writing went on in a similar manner

783 sporadically all during the day. After each character was
796 written, the sand was smoothed out again in preparation
787 for the next. These characters were all special spirit writing, direct communications from the gods which only the shaman is able to read and interpret. The statements may be criticism or praise of specific villagers or general information. Eventually, one character would proclaim when the fire for the walk should be started.

783 After about four hours, around 11:00, everyone quit
796 for lunch. It is possible that the gods could call for the fire within a very few minutes after the ceremony started, but no ceremony in memory however, had ever started before the first day's lunch break. Lunch was much more elaborate than usual and there were many guests in attendance. Outsiders had been arriving all day during the morning to observe the men running in the fields and to
[602] become guests for lunch. Few villagers did any regular
[573] work that day; even much of the cooking was performed by
[628] outsiders such as ch'in ch'i (affinal relatives) or sworn brothers from other villages who worked without pay. In turn, Sanlei would provide cooks for ceremonies, funerals, and weddings in other villages. Four sworn brother asso-
[66] ciations gathered for an extra lunch together. Politicians from Hsin Tien and the county visited each of the associations in turn for a few minutes and also visited the lunches hosted by the more important people.

783 796 787 At 1:00, everyone was back in the field and the ceremony started again. The temperature was now much hotter so it did not take as long as it had in the morning for the trances and running to start. A pair of chairs were carried down the hill, across the bridge, into the village proper, and in and out of the temple. 783 796 784 626 787 Many villagers became frightened as they observed the chairs head for the village for if the gods were truly angry with some man, the chair would enter his house and do some damage. The fear was not of damage but of the knowledge that the gods were strongly displeased. Fortunately, this did not happen although it had at the previous Erhlei ceremony to one important man. In this manner, any person in the community, no matter how important, can be severely criticized.

783 796 787 The gods spoke through two different young men at various times while they were in trances. Both were surnamed Liao and were members of old village families. One was a very proper and filial type but the other was considered a little too aggressive and had a reputation of frequenting the wine houses. The statements were in Taiwanese although any language is possible, even some spirit languages which can be translated only by a shaman. In total, there were more than seventy statements, at least one for every household in the village and a few extra general statements. Some statements were complementary

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but a majority were critical although all reinforced cultural values and standards.

A sample of the god's statements is listed below followed by my personal comments or explanations. As previously stated, in a normal situation, few of these statements would be permitted for seldom is there a face to face confrontation between an accuser and accusee unless the situation is going to degenerate into a serious fight. (Names are all disguised for obvious reasons.)

1. "Liao A.B.! You are a sincere man. I have helped you to recover your health. I am happy that you always come to clean and take care of the temple." (Subject had prostate trouble with considerable discharge. After various types of medical and shamanistic treatment failed to bring relief, he made a pledge at the temple that if the gods helped he would worship daily forever. The pain is almost gone and he seldom has any more discharge. Each morning, at daybreak, he opens the temple, pai pai's with incense, and puts flowers in the vases. Every villager is aware of his pledge and performance.)

2. "Liao C.D.! You are a bad-hearted[9] woman. You would not clean the dirty ditch in front of your house so the dirty water runs into the pond where other villagers wash clothes and vegetables." (Subject immediately ran off to clean her ditch. She frequently quarreled with her husband and his brother's wife.)

3. "Liao E.F.! Your second son has poor health. I will give him a charm. He should drink it in the early morning." (Subject is a community leader and head of an extended household. The charm is a package of herbs to be mixed with hot water. "To give" means that the speaking god will guide the proper stick out when the vase of medicine sticks is shaken.)

4. "Huang G.H.! Your wife is sick because she dried women's underpants in the kung t'ing in front of the gods. I will give you a charm for her to drink." (Subject is a local official and well liked.)

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5. "Liao I.J.! Old man, you are a good person and serve the gods. But your son is a bad-hearted person. He says bad things about people behind their backs." (The son is unfilial and wants to marry a village girl but her parents are refusing the match by asking a bride price of more than five times the standard amount.)

6. "Huang K.L.! Your sons' eyes hurt because you picked a bad day to fix your kitchen. You never worship the god's soldiers on the 1st and 15th of each month. You should worship on these days. I will give you charms for your family to drink." (Subject has a reputation for cheapness and refuses to spend proper amounts on ritual.)

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7. "Yu M.N.! Your eldest son is not strong because the altar in your kung t'ing is not properly located. You should think about your second son's marriage because he is too embarrassed to talk to you about it." (The altar is one of the two in the village on the side rather than the back wall in relationship to the door. The man through whom the gods were now speaking was the "second son" mentioned in the statement.)

8. "Chiu O.P.! Your son is fine. Do not worry about him." (Subject is poor but considered to be a good man. His son is in the army and stationed in Kin Men.)

As can be seen from the above samples, the gods speak through the young men to reinforce common values. We talked to many people afterwards and none thought that the two boys through whom the gods spoke were bad-hearted people; that is, they believed that the statements really came from the gods. They said that in the past, bad-hearted people have tried to pretend they were gods but they always got caught.

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About 3:30 p.m., the shaman interpreted a character written in the sand with the poles of a sedan chair as

805 There are similar pairs of two characters specifying
787 the month, day, and hour of one's birth. The eight characters, pa tsu, thereby produced are employed in determining compatibility or incompatibility of persons about to be married,[3] and are also used in fortune-telling. However, most people in the village could not immediately recall their own eight characters although most said they could be figured out.

Calendars

805 There are two important calendars which function
178 simultaneously in the village. The first is the standard
527 Western calendar with which all readers are familiar. It has become more important in the past few years, especially for those employed in modern firms because work schedules and payrolls are based on the Western solar calendar. The only major events in the village area which are determined by this calendar are the national holidays such as Restoration Day, Independence Day, and Chiang Kai-shek's Birthday. Meetings of government agencies and dates for paying taxes are set according to this calendar too.

805 The second calendar, the lunar, is the traditional
[795] form and is employed to determine the traditional religious holidays. Individual months are of 29 or 30 days duration, intermixed so that each new moon falls on the first day of a month. Months are simply numbered from one to twelve. Years are of unequal length, having either twelve or

796 the preparations start several days before New Year's Day and extend several days beyond encompassing many parties [931] and celebrations. Gifts are received from employers and gifts are provided to all regular vendors with whom an in- [574] dividual does business. There is a considerable amount of visiting with friends and relatives in the village and in the surrounding area as far as Taipei. Inscriptions are placed on the doors and New Year's evening itself is enlivened by firecrackers all night long. Virtually 100% of villagers participate in the various celebrations.

The New Year Season closes with the celebration of Shang-yuan (Lantern Festival) on the first month, fifteenth day. In addition to the elaborate food, worship, and firecrackers there is parading in the evening while carrying colorful lanterns which have candles inside. This affair [780] is most popular with children. Villagers believe that a single girl may learn something about her future husband and whether she will get married during the current year by interpreting the first thing she hears after setting out on the [777] parade with a lantern. Children are able to obtain good luck for an entire year by stealing vegetables growing in the fields without getting caught. Village adults rush about and loudly complain about thieves but are careful not to catch any children stealing. Most village families participate in Shang-yuan; the only exceptions are households without children.

4:Barnett E-4,5 (1965-1967) 1970 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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000 3 The basis of the relationship between the tea farmer and tea processor is much more than an economic one and is considered more fully in Chapter VI.

4 Rice is the general term for all food in the same sense that bread is use in the Western world as illustrated by the phrase, "Give us this day our daily bread."

5 The hu (household) is more adequately defined in Chapter V where it is contrasted with the chia (family).

6 Patrilocal and matrilocal are employed with traditional meanings. The local variations are considered more fully in Chapter V.

Chapter IV: Formal Social Organization and Social Control

1 In the recent election of December 20, 1969, several additional seats in the National Assembly and the Legislative Yuan were assigned to Taiwan.

2 Subsequent to the study, Taipei was detached from the province and made a "Special Municipality" which is virtually equal to provincial status.

3 For more details on the pao chia system, see Note 6 to Chapter II.

[586] 4 Most people who have enjoyed any reasonable level of financial success have invested in land. A minimal level of financial success appears to be a criteria for a leadership position. Since one goal of a man is to earn a living, by definition, a poor man must be considered ineffective and how could an ineffective man be a village leader?

5 For an extended discussion of Kan Ch'ing and its effects on Chinese social structure see Fried (1953: 102-3).

[212] [422] 6 A "chop" is a block on which the owner's name (in characters) is carved and which is dipped into an ink pad and used to stamp signatures on documents. It is considered to be more binding than a hand written signature and is the usual form which appears on checks and legal documents.

[787] 7 The means of interpreting the shen pei which are used to question the gods are discussed more fully in Chapter VII.

Chapter V: Kinship

1 Although considered briefly in Chapter VII, for further elaboration, see Hsu (1949), C. K. Yang (1967) or L. Thompson (1964:34-53).

2 Where possible, this will be a kinship term such as son, brother's wife, etc., but if there is no kinship relationship, the listing will be "live together."

3 Although Lang uses the term "joint family," it appears that her explanations are more in accord with the